

Where Did Your Dimples Go?

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Level 3



“Imma... Appa... come quick!” cried Langlen.

Langlen’s parents found her crouching by the almirah watching three kittens playing with each other, mewling softly.

“Imma...” started Langlen.

“Shhh, softly,” said Imma. “Kittens are easily scared.”



Suddenly, a big orange cat jumped in from the window. She ignored them and briskly went by and lay down. The three kittens rushed over and started suckling.

Langlen and her parents tiptoed out.



Langlen asked, “Wasn’t the grey one the Mamma-Cat’s kitten as well?”

“It was,” replied Appa.

“They why wasn’t it orange? Like the Mamma-Cat?”

“Maybe the Pappa-Cat is grey.”

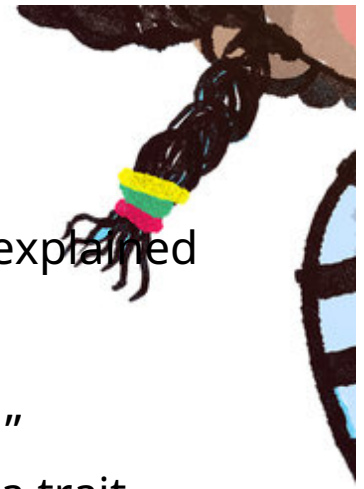
As Langlen was thinking about it, Appa continued, “The grey kitten has colouring like the Pappa-Cat, just like Langlen has curly hair like Appa!”



“But everyone says I look just like Imma. See, we even have clefts on our chins, which makes it look like our chins are divided.”

“You have a bit of both of us, because you are *our* sweet Langlen,” said Imma hugging her tight.

“Does the grey kitten also have a bit from both Pappa-Cat and Mamma-Cat?”



“Yes. All creatures with two parents have *traits* from both parents,” explained Appa.

“A *trait*? Oh wait, let me guess. Would my curly hair be called a *trait*?”
“Yes, that’s a trait, Langlen. Any quality or characteristic you have is a trait. Can you think of others?” asked Imma.

“Hmm... my height?”
“Yes, that’s another. The colour of your eyes, shape of your ears, length of your fingers and toes, and shape of your nose are all some of your characteristics,” explained Imma.

“My curly hair is a trait from Appa and cleft chin is a trait from Imma. Did you get those traits from *your* parents?”
“YES! You catch on quick. And they got their traits from *their* parents,” said Imma.





“But,” asked Langlen puzzled, “neither my grandmas nor my grandpas have cleft chins. Where did you get the trait from?”

“Sometimes traits skip a generation or more. My grandfather, whom I called Pupu, had a cleft chin. His children, which included my mother, did not have that trait. Then I got it and passed it on to you.”

“This makes me just a collection of traits from all of you,” said Langlen, a little sadly.

Imma quickly hugged her. “No, Langlen. The passing of traits from parents to children is called *heredity*. We might share traits, but each one of us is different. Your combination of traits makes you unique!”





“Look at me, Langlen,” said Appa. “I’m completely unique. Very tall, with long and curly hair on my head, face and ears. I am also the man with the widest feet in the world. What would you do if you had long curly hair on your ears?"



“Hmm…. I would plait it, Appa, and put colourful rubber-bands!”

Imma smiled at the two of them. “Women don’t have ear hair, Langlen, but you seem to have got your father’s trait for silly humour!”



Appa went out of the room and Langlen snuggled into Imma’s lap.

“I have one more question. *Ebok always says you had dimples like her. Where did they go?”

Laughing, Imma said, “I did get my mother’s trait for dimples. But then, every trait has many influences. Some influences made it come and others made it disappear.”

**Ebok: Grandmother in Manipuri*



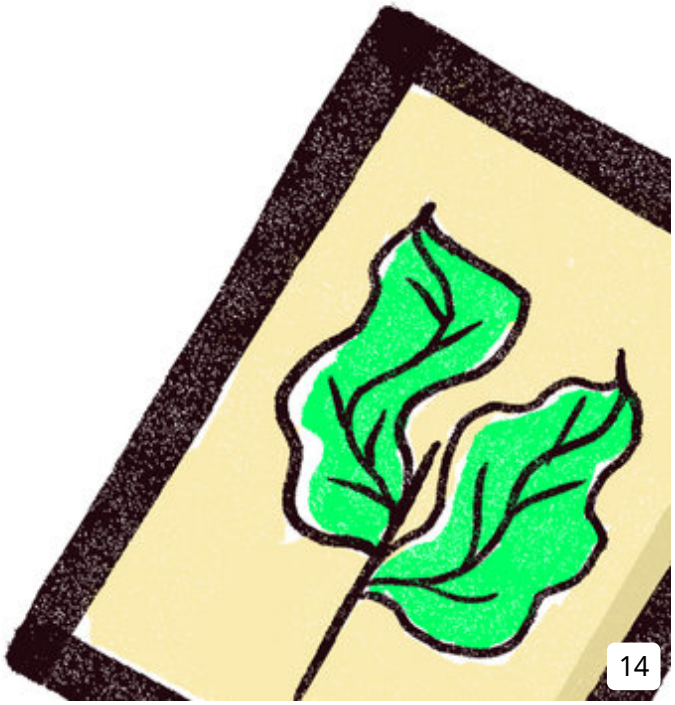
Appa came back with a covered plate.

“I am the influence which has made these yummy things magically appear on this plate!” So saying, he pulled the napkin off the plate. It was filled with hot vadas.

“And we are the influences which will make them disappear?” said Langlen, stuffing her mouth without waiting for an answer.

Understand the Difficult Words:

Imma: Mother in Manipuri
Ebok: Grandmother in Manipuri
Pupu: Grandfather in Manipuri
Cleft: Divided
Traits: Characteristic in a person, e.g., curly hair, cleft chin, dimples
Heredity: Passing of traits from parents to children
Generation: All the people that are born and live in about the same time
Unique: One of a kind
Influence: To have an effect on something
Vadas: Fried savoury dish





Make Your Own Family Tree

As you may have already guessed, Langlen's mother is from Manipur and father from Tamil Nadu.

Would you like to map out your own family tree just as Langlen did (pg 7 & 8)? Grab a paper and pen, and do it right away! If you get lost, you can always ask your parents for help.








WHAT WOULD YOUR IMAGINARY PET LOOK LIKE?

Straight or curly hair? Round nose or triangular nose?

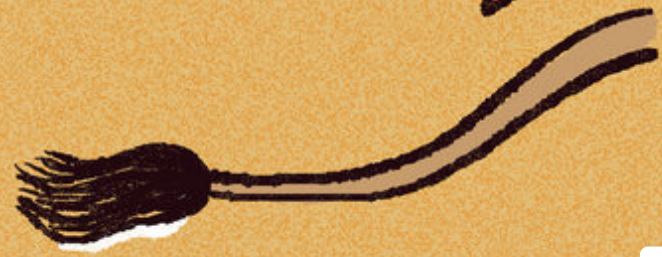
One leg, two legs or many more legs? A tail like a dog's or lion's?

Draw your own imaginary pet with all kinds of traits.

Mix it up and let your imagination run wild!





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Where Did Your Dimples Go?

(English)

Langlen has curly hair like Appa and a cleft chin like Imma. It makes her wonder why brothers and sisters, or parents and children look alike. Is she just a collection of traits, then? So many questions, but Imma and Appa have all the answers.

This is a Level 3 book for children who are ready to read on their own.

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